

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 19 and 20 are amended, and Claim 21 is added by the present amendment.

In response to the Restriction Requirement dated December 22, 2005 in the above-identified application, the Applicant provisionally elects Group I, Claims 1-10, 19 and 21 drawn to a processing apparatus for further prosecution on the merits, with traverse.

The Examiner asserted that the apparatus can be used for a different method such as one that does not supply nitrogen atoms or have charge removal. However, as clearly defined in the amended Claims 1, 2 and 19 and the newly added Claim 21, it is clear that nitrogen atoms are supplied into a processing chamber of the present apparatus, and therefore, the apparatus defined in Claims 1, 2, 19 and 21 are associated with the method claims.

Further, new Claim 21 is believed to be a linking claim for linking the processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 19 to the processing method as claimed in Claim 20 because the new Claim 21 is a claim directed to "means" for practicing a process linking proper apparatus and process claims, and thus form one invention for examination on the merits.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the invention of Group I and Group II be included in one application and be examined by the Examiner for an expeditious and efficient prosecution proceeding and for a consistent examination. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment,
an action on the merits is earnestly solicited respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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